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MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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A summary of significant events of
interest to USDA management

FEB 14 '79

Issue #20
September 19, 1975

SENATE REJECTS S. RES. 239 BY VOTE OF 53-39....The resolution, if adopted, would have disapproved the 5% pay raise limitation. While the House can still disapprove the limitation, it is doubtful that they will do so.

MEETING HELD WITH GSA ON COMPUTER PROCUREMENT.....Mr. Wright, Mr. Bolduc, and Mr. Meetze met with GSA officials on Friday, Sept. 19. A tentative GSA position was reached; however, Dwight Ink, Deputy Administrator, GSA, must "sign off" on it before it becomes the formal GSA position. As soon as that occurs, we will let you know. (The printing of the Newsletter was delayed to include this information.) (Contact: H.W. Meetze, ADS, ext. 76275)

DEPARTMENT ESTIMATES WILL BE PROVIDED TO AGENCIES NEXT WEEK.....The Secretary's budget hearings with agencies ended yesterday, Sept. 18. Agency estimates have been closely reviewed by Department Staffs with agencies and Assistant Secretaries. Final review will now be made with the Secretary and decisions will be given to agencies as early as possible next week. (Contact: Steve Dewhurst, OMF, ext. 76176)

SCS MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM CONDUCTED IN D.C. FOR TOP FIELD OFFICIALS.... This week Assistant State Conservationists and top field program staff leaders attended an SCS "Level V" management training session in Washington. SCS has 7 levels in their management training program, ranging from Level I for all new employees to Level VII for the key agency officials. The attendees at the Level V conference received briefings from USDA Staff Directors; OMB officials, the Brookings Institute; Congressional liaison personnel; and key SCS officials. The participants in this session have all been identified as having the potential to move up to top policy level positions. (Contact: Verne Bathurst, SCS, ext. 76297)

ORIENTATION PROGRAM BEING DESIGNED TO ASSIST NEW SENIOR LEVEL EXECUTIVES WITH INITIATION INTO USDA.....The Program will be required procedure for every incoming executive. The orientation will consist of: (1) USDA management philosophy and process; (2) organization - mission and history; (3) USDA programs and goals; (4) status of important legislation; (5) the budget; (6) key people; (7) basic personnel information; and (8) OMB and CSC relationships. (Contact: Tom Gill, OP, ext. 73635)

OI AND THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE.....As a USDA executive, you:

Can

- . . . Conduct limited administrative preliminary inquiries.
- . . . Determine the need for administrative action or the need for OI investigation.
- . . . Request OI investigative service.
- . . . Cooperate in OI inquiries.
- . . . Evaluate OI report findings.
- . . . Circulate reports in USDA on a need-to-know basis.
- . . . Discuss OI reports with other Executive Branch agencies, when necessary.
- . . . Take action on OI investigative reports.

Cannot

- . . . Conduct your own investigation (except as provided by law or regulation).
- . . . Obstruct an OI inquiry by withholding information or taking premature action.
- . . . Release information about ongoing investigations to Congress, the press, or other members of the public without prior coordination with OI.
- . . . Release OI reports outside USDA.
- . . . Furnish information from OI reports where the information might interfere with criminal prosecution or USDA administrative action or violate the recently enacted Privacy Act.

(Contact: Rod Elam, OI, ext. 76979)

RESPONSIBILITIES TRANSFERRED FROM JUDICIAL OFFICER.....The Board of Contract Appeals was transferred to the Assistant Secretary for Administration. The publication of "Agriculture Decisions" is now under the Office of Communication.

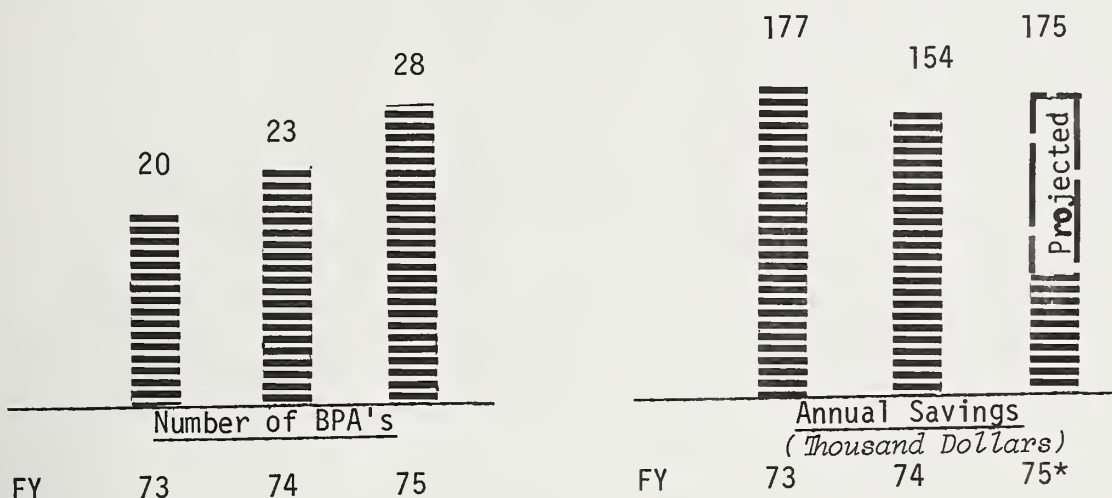
GUILTY PLEAS IN EXPORT GRAIN MATTER.....A tugboat captain and four others pled guilty this week in New Orleans to charges involving the Grain Standards Act, the Warehouse Act, and income tax evasion. Of the 48 individuals and four firms indicted in New Orleans to date, 26 have pled guilty or were found guilty, and 26 have not come to trial. (Contact: Rod Elam, OI, ext. 76979)

PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT AWARDS DUE IN OP OCT. 20.....Agencies should review significant management improvements and consider those who contributed as potential nominees. (Contact: Mae Paulsen, OP, ext. 75618)

NATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE LEAGUE TO HONOR USDA CAREER EMPLOYEES.....On Oct. 29, T. W. Edminster, Administrator, ARS, will receive the League's 1975 Career Service Award and Edgar E. Hartwig, Research Agronomist, ARS, Stoneville, Miss., will receive the Special Achievement Award. (Contact: Mae Paulsen, OP, ext. 75618)

SAVINGS RESULT FROM BLANKET PURCHASE ARRANGEMENTS.....00 annually negotiates Department-side blanket purchase arrangements (BPA's) under Federal Supply Service contracts. These BPA's enable our decentralized procurement offices nationwide to obtain single units of equipment and supplies at quantity discount prices--5 to 15 percent below single unit prices. The use of BPA's also results in time savings in the selection and procurement process. (Contact: Dean Smith, 00, PGAMS, ext. 77527)

USDA BPA's - Annual Savings



* FY 75 reports incomplete--
Savings are expected to
exceed FY 74.

DEPARTMENT'S EEO COMMITTEE REORGANIZED.....The reason for the reorganization was that the Committee had not been as effective as the Director of EEO had hoped for in terms of development of recommendations and providing advisory services to him on the USDA EEO program. Part of this problem was caused by the EEO Staff taking too much of a role in the Committee and leaving little for the members to do. Under the reorganization, a chairman was selected from among the members. The Committee has been given the charter to identify EEO problems, develop specific projects designed to address those problems, and then develop well planned recommendations, including the completed staff work in terms of cost estimates and clear delineation of the benefits to be derived from any proposals. After six months of operation under the new structure, the EEO Committee will make a recommendation to the Director of EEO as to whether it should continue to function. (Contact: Robert Birdsong, Jr., OP, ext. 72973)

AGENCIES SET THEIR FY 1976 8(a) PROGRAM GOALS.....The total goal for these minority business contracts is \$1,140,062 over the actual achievement for FY 1975. The individual goals follow:

	FY 1975 <u>Achievement</u>	FY 1976 <u>GOAL</u>
FS	\$1,364,064	\$1,500,000
AMS	134,125	780,000
SCS	374,000	750,000
ARS	226,000	495,000
FNS	606,357	380,000
APHIS	73,429	120,000
OO	70,005	50,000
FmHA	42,000	40,000
ASCS	94,958	10,000
Total	<u>\$2,984,938</u>	<u>\$4,125,000</u>

(Contact: J. Fred King, OEO, ext. 77117)

HIGHLIGHTS OF SEPT. 18 COUNCIL MEETING.....

OVERDUE DATE.....Some agencies still have not responded to ADS concerning the information for the A-11 submission.

Mr. Meetze announced that ADS will sponsor a Departmental Conference on Data Processing. The proposed 1 1/2 day meeting in November is to acquaint agency senior ADP managers with new developments in the industry. The topics to be covered are (1) Project Planning and Control; (2) New Programming Technology and Techniques; and (3) Mini-computers.

Sy Pranger briefly discussed the summary of the 11 Rights Commission report on the effort to eliminate employment discrimination in Federal employment. He noted that the report may result in Congressional legislative initiative during the Second Session.

Based on an earlier Council request, OO studied the USDA assessment for GSA Federal Information Centers and reported to the Council. The Council agreed to the recommendation to ask GSA that the assessment request be discontinued and an appropriation be sought for this purpose.

Council members had received position papers addressing three major data processing issues: (1) ADS role in Department-wide ADP Systems Design and Development; (2) ADP Billing Structure; and (3) the REP charter. These were discussed and concurrence was expressed to the recommendations concerning Systems Design and Development and the REP Charter. Some agencies expressed concern about the "community of centers" billing philosophy; however, ADS indicated that if this philosophy were to be implemented, it would be preceded by at least a 3-month test.